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Chairman: Mr. Koonjul (Vice-President) ..... (Mauritius)

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In the absence of Ms. Risa (Finland), Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits (A/59/98-E/2004/79, E/2004/52 and E/2004/71)

(a) Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development (A/59/92-E/2004/73, A/59/92/Add.1-E/2004/73/Add.1 and A/59/92/Add.2-E/2004/73/Add.2)

(b) Review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 (A/59/94-E/2004/77 and E/2004/54)

Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B (E/2004/71)

1. **The President** informed the Council that the Bureau had considered a letter from the Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), requesting that the CPC report should be considered at a later date, at a resumed session of the Council. The Bureau had decided to accede to that request.

2. **Mr. Chowdhury** (High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States) introduced the Secretary-General's second annual progress report on the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action (E/2004/77). Progress by the LDCs towards the Brussels goals was very varied; while some LDCs had made remarkable progress, in others a high population growth rate, continuing conflicts and natural disasters were an impediment, along with the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which had hit LDCs particularly hard, especially those in Africa and Asia. Infection rates for malaria, too, were high.

3. With regard to undernourishment, no tangible change was to be noted, but significant progress has been made towards universal primary education and gender equality in that field and in literacy. In secondary and tertiary education, however, all LDCs lagged behind. On average, women's representation in Parliaments also remained low.

4. Agriculture ought to be an engine for growth and income-generation in the LDCs, yet production was declining and LDCs were being marginalized in agricultural trade, while agricultural support for them from OECD countries was falling. In spite of the high priority accorded to infrastructure development in the Brussels Programme, it remained rudimentary in most LDCs and particularly in landlocked ones, and the digital divide between the LDCs and developed countries was as great as ever.

5. While the opportunities for LDCs to export to developed countries remained severely limited, enhanced South-South cooperation was resulting in knowledge-sharing, technology transfers and expansion of trade between other developing countries and LDCs, where exports had more than doubled over the last decade. Recognition of the need for special treatment for LDCs and a resumption of the negotiations for the Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) among developing countries during UNCTAD XI had real potential for trade expansion for LDCs.

6. Most of the LDCs had adopted the policies advocated in the Brussels Programme, and many of the 23 African countries which had volunteered to join the ground-breaking Peer Review Mechanism were LDCs. The Office of the High Representative was preparing a compendium of best practices to showcase that effort. There were, however, still major impediments hampering the LDCs' development efforts. While it was their primary responsibility to implement the Programme at the national level, the report called for their development partners in the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions and bilateral and multilateral donors to provide support to them in building human, institutional and technical capacity. The Office of the High Representative had undertaken various initiatives to mobilize support and put their concerns high on the global agenda through monitoring and follow-up within the framework of the Brussels Programme and through coordination at all levels, both within the United Nations system and outside it, using its own resources and those of such Secretariat mechanisms as the United Nations Development Group and the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs. An Inter-Agency Task Force was being considered to provide a more coherent approach to implementation of the Programme at the global level. At the regional and national levels, too, the Office of the High Representative was active, working for

advocacy and synergy. A workshop had been held in May for the National Focal Points from LDCs to strengthen their national capacity for follow-up and implementation, provide a forum for sharing experience and build the foundations for future cooperation.

7. Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Programme were a major challenge to the Office of the High Representative, because of the way in which some of the goals were formulated and because of an absence of data, which many LDCs lacked the capacity and infrastructure to collect. A suitable time had to be chosen for a midterm review, with the 2006 Council review process perhaps being adjusted appropriately for this purpose, and the Office would appreciate guidance in this respect.

8. **Mr. Civili** (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs) stated that, since the Millennium Summit and the Monterrey and Johannesburg meetings, development issues were at the forefront of the multilateral agenda, and that it was time to move from commitments to action. The Council had a key role to play in achieving a coordinated and coherent approach and General Assembly resolution 57/270 B provided a solid framework. In resolution 2003/6, the Council had requested an updated report from the Secretary-General, whose report (E/2004/71) not only provided information about which provisions of the General Assembly resolution had been implemented so far, but also made recommendations for the future.

9. Three aspects of the implementation of the General Assembly resolution were relevant to the work of the Council. The first was a thorough review of the cross-sectoral themes common to the outcomes of major conferences and summits, in order to promote an integrated and coordinated approach. At the current session, the themes of the high-level and coordination segments were linked, to the satisfaction of participants.

10. The second relevant aspect was the coordination and strengthening of the relationships between the functional commissions, the regional commissions, the organizations in the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions and financial and trade institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the links between all of them, NGOs and the private sector. There was potential for closer links between the General Assembly, the Council and the functional commissions, on the one hand, and the governing bodies of the rest of the United Nations system, on the other, and also for stronger regional contributions to integrated follow-up for conferences, measures for which were proposed in the Secretary-General's report and which included improved cooperation with funds and programmes. It was also important to ensure that all relevant stakeholders continued to be involved in a systematic way, and to enhance the Council's interaction with financial and trade institutions.

11. The third aspect was the role of the Council both in follow-up to recent conferences, and in the preparations for the high-level meeting during the General Assembly session, where the Council should focus on how best to contribute not only in its own right, but also by harnessing the contributions of the functional and regional commissions and other bodies.

12. There were likewise three key elements to be taken into account for enhancing coherence in policy development at the intergovernmental level and in strengthening the links between policy development, programme formulation and operational implementation at both national and regional level. The first was the establishment of a framework for linkages between the Millennium Development Goals and the cross-cutting themes of United Nations conferences, to enable effective contributions to the review in 2005 and its follow-up. The second was the triennial comprehensive policy review which the General Assembly would undertake at its forthcoming session and for which the Council had prepared the ground during its operational segment the previous week. The Council should consider how the policy guidance developed by that review could best be fed back into the policy development work of the functional commissions and executive boards in the system, so that they could cross-fertilize and create new and fruitful synergies. The third was the need for the regional commissions to be involved in the processes so as to ensure a regional dimension, making their work a fully integrated part of the preparatory process for the 2005 follow-up.

13. **Mr. Davidse** (Observer for the Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the candidate countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, and Turkey), the stabilization and association process countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia) and, in addition, the EFTA countries (Liechtenstein and Norway), welcomed the statement by the High Representative and its emphasis on issues very relevant to LDCs and pointed out how important the coming year would be for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The ministerial segment should focus on conference follow-up and implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, while the coordination segment focused on how the United Nations system helped to achieve all these aims. Thus the substantive session of 2005 would contribute to the 2005 review, drawing attention to economic, social and sustainable development and human rights and refocusing the Council's agenda.

14. The discussion on a multi-year programme for the coordination segment was useful and fulfilled the mandate of General Assembly resolution 57/270 B. The Council and its functional commissions were playing an important role in conference follow-up, in several different ways: firstly, through the special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO discussing the follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus, which had stressed the financial aspects of the Millennium Development Goals. The second way was through the Commission on Sustainable Development, which in its follow-up to the Johannesburg meeting had identified challenges concerning water, sanitation and human settlements. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report, the Council could next year consider the lessons to be learned from the Commission's new approach, resulting in a concrete set of actions and a clearer understanding of the role of different actors at various levels. Other functional commissions should also consider how to reform their working methods in order to implement General Assembly resolution 57/270 B. The Commission on Population and Development at its most recent session had voiced its reaffirmation of the Cairo Programme of Action, fundamental in the view of the European Union to the development and human rights agendas, and adopted a resolution on the importance of follow-up to that Programme for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Statistical Commission had worked to develop indicators for the Millennium Development Goals, and the European Union would report more fully in 2005 on its contribution in that respect. All functional commissions would be expected to focus on the 2005 event as it drew closer, including the Commission on the Status of Women 10 years after the Beijing Platform for Action and the Commission on Social Development as it considered implementation of its Copenhagen agenda in 2005. Coordination between the boards of funds and programmes was also important for the follow-up to summits and conferences, and the efforts of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its High Level Committee on Programmes in that respect were highly appreciated. Thanks to all that work, the Council should be an important voice in 2005, sending a message of sustainable development, social justice and great expectations for the future.

15. **Mr. Rangel** (Observer for Mexico) reiterated his country's unequivocal commitment to the implementation of the agreements reached at the International Conference on Financing for Development and its firm support of the Council as an essential pillar of the follow-up mechanism of that Conference. He was pleased to note that the Monterrey spirit was reflected in the agendas of the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and the United Nations system. It was particularly gratifying that civil society and the private sector had also been participating in the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. However, there was a need for the Council to conduct the current assessment in order to improve the Conference follow-up mechanism.

16. Internationally, Mexico had hosted a forum on the "Reinvention of Government" and a conference for the signing of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Nationally, it had enacted legislation such as the Federal Law on Transparency and Access to Governmental Public Information and a law guaranteeing access to the civil service on the basis of merit.

17. The integrated approach with which the development problems identified at Monterrey had been addressed must be fully respected and maintained. Breaking the impasse to the implementation of the Doha Agenda, particularly on such issues as agricultural subsidies and access for developing countries to the markets of industrialized nations, would be key to speeding up implementation of the Consensus. Reform of the international financial architecture required increased participation by developing countries in the decision-making processes of the international financial institutions. Even though the decline in official development assistance had not

been halted, it would be important to give renewed impetus to that means of development financing. The follow-up to Monterrey must focus on alliances for the implementation of the commitments made and the Council should help to define guidelines in the areas of assessment and review, identify problems and priorities, and promote innovative frameworks for cooperation.

18. For Mexico, the effective implementation by Member States of the commitments made in Monterrey were not only imperative but also the precondition for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The dialogue which the Council would be conducting with the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO in 2005 must focus on how the Monterrey Consensus could be translated into achievement of the Millennium Goals and other international social and economic development goals. Some thought would also have to be given to the date on which the General Assembly High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development should be held.

19. **Ms. Liu** Hua (China) said the review of financing for development showed that, on the whole, progress was still uneven and insufficient. In implementing the Monterrey Consensus, national governments should shoulder the primary responsibility of financing for development, exploring their own potential and building their own capacity. On the basis of ongoing reforms, countries should continue to accelerate market reform, improve management, revitalize enterprises and mobilize financial resources.

20. It was also necessary to improve and strengthen management at the global level and establish a fair, equitable and effective international financial framework and multilateral trading system. Coordination and cooperation among international economic institutions should be strengthened and the United Nations should play a leading role in that regard. A fair multilateral trading system was an important channel for the developing countries to use comparative advantages in order to mobilize financial resources and achieve economic and social development. All parties involved in the new round of WTO negotiations should learn from the Cancún conference and show determination and wisdom in balancing the concerns of different parties, giving special consideration to the needs of developing countries.

21. There was an urgent need for developed countries to fulfil their financing commitments so as to ensure the quality and quantity of development assistance. Efforts to increase ODA should be conducted in parallel with efforts to improve its efficiency. Donor and recipient countries should enjoy an equal partnership and work together on the basis of mutual respect.

22. As financing for development was an important channel for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, she recommended that, in establishing an evaluation framework for implementing those Goals, supervision of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus could also be conducted by various parties, while evaluation should be conducted primarily within the United Nations system. The comparative advantage in terms of data collection and statistics of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other international institutions could be used for comprehensive evaluation. China supported the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions in enhancing cooperation and coordination for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. In that regard, it was necessary to encourage full participation by governments, the private sector and non-governmental organizations so as to achieve complementarity and mutual promotion.

23. It was her delegation's hope that a general plan of follow-up actions would be formulated for implementing the Monterrey Consensus, with highly functional programmes involving different phases and key areas, which could be evaluated. China supported the initiative from developing countries for the establishment of a special committee on financing for development with a view to enhancing effective implementation of the Monterrey Consensus by all parties.

24. Turning to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, she stressed that the international community was duty bound to provide support and assistance to those countries. ODA was of special significance in the economic development of least developed countries. She called on developed donor countries to increase the ratio of their ODA to GDP in order to achieve the targets set as soon as possible. Developed countries should cancel the debts of LDCs, especially the heavily indebted ones, so that they could use their limited resources for development. They should also encourage

their national enterprises to invest more in LDC economies and should implement the agreement for zero tariffs and quotas as soon as possible. Moreover, least developed countries should be provided with preferential access to markets so as to promote their integration into the multilateral trading system and enable them to benefit from multilateral negotiations.

25. **Mr. Al-Bader** (Qatar), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the issue of integrated and coordinated follow-up had been on the Council's agenda since 1995. The focus on cross-cutting thematic issues had helped in promoting the implementation of the outcomes of conferences and summits. However, the individual follow up for each conference should maintain its own identity. The high-level meeting to be held in 2005 should follow that approach.

26. The challenge for that meeting would be to ensure that the goals of the conferences and the Millennium Development Goals were pursued in a coherent and mutually reinforcing manner. The Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals could be achieved only through the provision of necessary means of implementation, including financial resources, transfer of technology and capacity-building for developing countries.

27. Bringing together the outcomes of the Johannesburg, Monterrey and Brussels conferences, as well as the Barbados Plan of Action and the outcomes of other United Nations conferences and summits, so as to ensure that their goals were achieved in a timely manner, entailed a broader system-wide coordination, particularly at the country level for the implementation of the development goals. The Group of 77 and China proposed that the item should be considered in the coordination segment instead of the general segment, starting from the substantive session of 2005. Furthermore, the agenda item dealing with the implementation of resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B should be merged with the item on system-wide coordination, as both dealt with the overall work of the United Nations system in the economic, social and related fields.

28. **Mr. Neil** (Jamaica), said that the Council should play an important role in following up major conferences and summits. It should not be merely a channel through which reports were fed, but should give substantive consideration to how to implement conference outcomes. The Council should also consider the possibility of creating specific machinery for monitoring the follow-up to conferences and summits.

29. In the Council's deliberations, the emphasis should be on monitoring the implementation of conference outcomes based on a results-oriented approach, rather than the current emphasis on analysis and process. Indeed, the Council should be able to assess how far the international community had gone in achieving and meeting internationally agreed goals and obligations.

30. While his delegation welcomed the report of the Secretary-General in document E/2004/71, it had some reservations with regard to the recommendation in paragraph 13, which it believed would detract from the results-oriented approach the Council should be taking. His delegation fully agreed with the recommendations in paragraphs 21 and 27, as it believed that the functional commissions should give the Council a good assessment of what they were doing with regard to implementation in order to facilitate a very informed comprehensive review in 2005. He also expressed very strong support for the recommendation in paragraph 57 and hoped that the document entitled "A fair globalization: creating opportunities for all" would be used specifically in that context, since it contributed a very valuable perspective on how the process of globalization was being implemented and how its impact on developing countries needed to be monitored. Referring to meetings with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), he said that they should lead to some kind of conclusions on which follow up could be undertaken and ongoing contacts established. The Bureau of the Council could be the mechanism for such ongoing contacts.

31. **Mr. Mahiga** (United Republic of Tanzania), noting that the Brussels Commitments were far behind schedule, said that the Brussels Programme of Action could not be implemented unless the international community built a fair globalization process which affirmatively included and accommodated the least developed countries and cushioned them against its adverse consequences. The economies of the least developed countries had particular structural constraints and vulnerabilities which required a combination of special remedial measures and policy

instruments to overcome them. A dynamic dialogue was needed among all partners and within the countries involved on such crucial issues as aid, trade, debt sustainability and levels of ODA, as well as financing the Millennium Development Goals and long-term requirements for economic investment.

32. While issues of good governance in all aspects at national and international levels were important, human and institutional capacity-building were pivotal requirements for successful implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action. His Government had put in place key institutions, systems and processes for democratic governance contained in the National Framework for Good Governance. It had also established a Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance, an Ethics Secretariat and a National Audit Office. The Tanzania Assistance Strategy was the national framework for aid coordination and effective management of external resources for the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy.

33. Least developed countries had shown a strong commitment to implementing the Brussels Programme of Action by establishing national focal points, which were working closely with the Office of the High Representative. At the national level, LDCs needed to continue and consolidate macroeconomic reforms to encourage economic growth and institutionalize good governance in all its aspects.

34. At the international level, problems requiring attention included external indebtedness, the attainment of agreed ODA targets, openness and transparency in decision-making in the international financial and trade institutions and the setting of measurable indicators to follow up implementation of all the Millennium Development Goals.

35. **Ms. Houngbedji** (Benin), speaking on behalf of the group of least developed countries, said that the annual review of progress in implementing the Brussels Programme of Action should be an effective tool for follow-up that would enable the least developed countries to assess their achievements, the difficulties and obstacles encountered and future prospects so that the Programme of Action would not suffer the same fate as the two previous programmes. The Council had requested, by its resolution 2003/17, a more analytical and results-focused report. However, the current report (E/2004/77) had not adopted the results-based quantifiable approach requested by the least developed countries, making it difficult to assess progress.

36. In regard to commitment 1 on fostering a people-centred policy framework, the report had merely noted how many LDCs had registered a growth rate of more than 3 per cent in 2003, without mentioning how those results had been achieved or what lessons other LDCs could learn from them. The group of least developed countries wanted the report to produce added value and not provide information that anyone could obtain by reading newspapers or surfing the Internet.

37. In regard to commitment 2 on good governance at national and international levels, she was pleased to note that a number of LDCs had been involved in various activities intended to achieve good governance, which was important not only for LDCs. Judging by the information provided in the report, however, the international community, in contrast to the LDCs, had apparently taken no steps to fulfil its commitments in that area.

38. In regard to commitment 3 on building human and institutional capacity, a sector-by-sector analysis would have given a clearer picture of the progress thus far achieved by LDCs with the commendable support of their development partners. She therefore hoped that precise figures would be provided in the future.

39. In regard to commitment 4 on building productive capacities to make globalization work for the LDCs, she commented on the absence of information in the report on the activities of LDCs and their development partners in major sectors such as technology, industry, agriculture and so on. Figures could easily have been obtained in order to give a global picture of the progress achieved. She welcomed, however, the recent publication of the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization and the synopsis thereof contained in the annex to document A/59/98-E/2004/79.

40. In regard to commitment 5 on enhancing the role of trade in development, she reiterated that the report offered no adequate assessment of the wide range of measures adopted by the LDCs and their development partners with a view to fulfilling that commitment. She wished to thank those countries which had introduced initiatives and programmes aimed at improving market access opportunities for LDCs. It was again disappointing, however, that the report gave no indication of the results attained, which would have

served to gauge the impact of such measures on economic growth in the LDCs. Similarly, given the failure to provide a breakdown of the many activities carried out in fulfilment of commitment 6 on reducing vulnerability and protecting the environment, it was impossible to gain any clear idea of the progress achieved.

41. In regard to commitment 7 on mobilizing financial resources, it was also impossible to obtain an overall idea of the sums mobilized during the period covered by the report. She acknowledged with gratitude the efforts of those development partners which had exceeded the ODA target and thanked others, including United Nations funds and programmes, for their continuing support for LDCs.

42. In future, the annual report on implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 should describe the concrete results of measures adopted to that end and compare the commitments undertaken against the progress achieved. On behalf of the LDCs, she requested dissemination of the Brussels Programme of Action within the United Nations system with a view to its incorporation into United Nations programmes of work. She also suggested that negotiations could be conducted with bilateral and multilateral development partners in order to designate key sector leaders and subsequently mobilize the resources and technical assistance needed to implement the Brussels Programme of Action. A minimum annual programme of work should be established, together with a road map of activities. All LDCs should effectively participate in the next assessment of the progress achieved in implementing the Brussels Programme of Action. In that connection, she asked to what extent Assembly resolution 58/228 requesting United Nations financing for that participation had been implemented. In conclusion, she urged the Office of the High Representative to continue its efforts, in conjunction with all the relevant players, to fulfil its mandate.

43. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh), after concurring with the statement made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, highlighted the increasing marginalization of the world's poorest, whose numbers were projected almost to double by 2015 if current trends persisted. LDCs were striving to fulfil their part of the commitments under the Brussels Programme of Action; Bangladesh, for instance, had accomplished considerable progress in such areas as primary school enrolment, infant mortality reduction and decline in population growth. During the 1990s, malnutrition had fallen even faster than income poverty, the number of women microcredit borrowers had reached 12 million, GDP had increased by 60 per cent and per capita income had grown three times faster than average in the low-income countries. Such successes were attributable to a variety of factors, including a prudent mix of socio-economic strategies, sound macroeconomic management, pro-market policies and, most importantly, innovative home-grown ideas such as microcredit, informal education and social forestation. In the belief that development should come from within and be supported from without, Bangladesh had prepared an interim poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), incorporating the commitments made at Brussels, in conjunction with all major stakeholders. Its social achievements, however, would be unsustainable without a commensurate level of economic development and the continuing reduction of income poverty was contingent on the external environment of aid, trade, debt and remittances.

44. Bangladesh was also taking a number of legal and other measures under paragraph 78 of the Brussels Programme of Action in order to create an enabling environment that provided the best context for domestic and international resource mobilization, although the effective implementation of such measures would be difficult without additional external resources. In order to mobilize domestic resources, it had increased its tax net and was also helped in its efforts by civil society and NGOs, particularly in the important area of microcredit. In the LDCs, aid played a crucial role in capacity-building. He therefore commended those partners which had exceeded the target for donating a portion of their GDP to the LDCs and hoped that their much-needed support would continue. Another effective means of assistance would be to channel foreign direct investments to the LDCs with a view to building domestic supply capacity. Resources would also be released by the cancellation of LDC debts, a grave problem which necessitated a comprehensive solution.

45. He supported the proposal concerning the role of the Council in monitoring implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action and said that the results-oriented approach suggested by the Jamaican representative merited serious consideration. In conclusion, he said that the commitments made by the

international community must be honoured and assistance in capacity-building rendered in the interests of a better, more prosperous and peaceful future for all.

46. **Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) noted the Russian Federation's consistent support for a stronger United Nations presence in the economy of the modern world and the challenges it faced, as advocated at many United Nations conferences and summits over the previous decade. The Council had a key part to play in integrating and coordinating implementation of the outcomes of those meetings.

47. The format for the work of the Council, renewed in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B, was appropriate for a more active and effective organ and adequate to deal with the majority of the serious proposals on further strengthening the substantive role of the Council. Some of the proposals were already being implemented, for instance in discussions of the multi-year work programme for the coordination segment and a more effective structure for reports. The Russian Federation was grateful to the Secretary-General for his updated report on the role of the Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits (E/2004/71), with its recommendations that contributed to the effective implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B. He wondered, however, whether there really was a need to give "greater thematic coherence" to the substantive session by organizing all segments around a single theme, and whether that would not narrow the scope of the Council's work. It would not be easy to transform the decisions of the high-level segment into substantive guidelines for various agencies in the space of only a few days, and it was also important to avoid the duplication of discussions at different segments.

48. The Russian Federation did not agree that the Council's annual policy dialogue with financial and trade institutions should focus exclusively on globalization, since the dialogue was the only forum at that level and it was important to maintain the broad and general format of the discussion. Increasing participation by NGOs and civil society was to be welcomed, as a sign of their greater real contribution to the implementation of United Nations goals and guidelines.

49. The Russian delegation supported enhancing the role of the functional commissions in monitoring implementation of the decisions taken at conferences, especially those that were global in scope. It supported the Secretary-General's recommendation in paragraph 27 for the functional commissions to identify more clearly issues that required a system-wide response and guidance from the Council to agencies and the idea of strengthening the links between subsidiary bodies and the Council itself in implementation of conference outcomes (para. 33). The regional commissions, too, had a part to play in taking cross-sectoral and multilateral dialogue to their level, and more active use could be made of the relevant subregional mechanisms.

50. The Russian Federation recognized the importance of increased cooperation between the Council and international financial and trade institutions. It would be worthwhile to consider the elaboration of a multi-year programme of meetings under the overall theme of cooperation in implementing the Monterrey Consensus, which could be organized by the President and Vice-Presidents of the Council.

51. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that the creation of an enabling environment for economic growth was at the heart of the Monterrey Consensus and added that the report of the United Nations Commission on the Private Sector and Development was important to understanding the role of the private sector in creating sustainable economic growth. Enabling that sector to help the poor to prosper should be systematically integrated into development assistance efforts. To that end, the United States would be submitting a draft resolution on follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development that recommended that the Commission's recommendations should be broadly disseminated throughout the United Nations system. In regard to the desire expressed by some for increased monitoring of the internationally agreed development goals and the establishment of new mechanisms for that purpose, it was her delegation's view that a results-based approach at the country level would reveal much more about the progress towards those goals than an approach focused on input and statistics on that input.

52. **Ms. Ruder** (Observer for Switzerland) said that the Council had played an important role in initiating an integrated approach to the follow-up of summits and conferences by focusing on the common themes of

such events. Its role in supporting implementation of the internationally agreed development goals was also crucial, as was its role in ensuring a stronger link between policy guidance and implementation activities in the respective intergovernmental bodies. A cross-sectoral approach to reviewing progress in the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences, as well as their follow-up processes, would enable the Council to focus its work and become a stronger partner. Further enhancement of the linkages between policy guidance and coordination, however, was still needed.

53. Bearing in mind the key role of the functional commissions in following up those outcomes, she welcomed the innovative steps taken by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to reform its working methods and thus create a cycle that promoted a true linkage between the expert and the policy level. She also welcomed the similar efforts of the Commission for Social Development; the efficiency of its work had consequently been enhanced by its panel discussions on emerging issues and its focus on questions relevant to the session in hand. She encouraged the functional commissions to exchange experiences, in which context she welcomed the recommendation in paragraph 22 of document E/2004/71.

54. In connection with the Council's role in monitoring implementation of the triennial comprehensive policy review, further thought should be given to the respective roles of the Council and the joint board meetings of United Nations funds and programmes. There was also scope for an increased exchange of experience between the latter and the functional commissions. She welcomed the recommendation to build thematic linkages into the agendas and work programmes of the governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations, an approach which would enhance the policy dialogue between the different bodies.

55. She agreed that the contribution of other stakeholders in the work of the Council injected dynamism into the intergovernmental process and was crucial to implementation of the internationally agreed development goals. Moreover, the Council had created a number of platforms aimed at enhancing dialogue with a variety of other institutions. In that context, she welcomed the annual special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO but felt that scope remained for further enhancing that dialogue and ensuring the continuity of such meetings. Lastly, she fully supported the theme proposed by the Secretary-General for the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly in 2005.

56. **Mr. Balarezo** (Observer for Peru) stressed that the Council, its subsidiary bodies and United Nations funds and programmes had a crucial contribution to make to the preparations for the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to be held in 2005. Within their respective areas of competence, they were in a position to identify the amount of progress achieved in implementing the internationally agreed development goals. As for the special high-level meeting to be held in 2005, attention should be focused on the Monterrey Consensus, with particular emphasis on the financing of the Millennium Development Goals. In that context, he highlighted the need for the Secretariat to contribute to the discussion and for the examination of issues at the intersection of the various chapters of the Monterrey Consensus in order to achieve a system-wide analysis. To that end, the work of the functional commissions was also important, although much remained to be done in developing assessment indicators of international commitments. In particular, those relating to the eighth Millennium Development Goal appeared to be insufficient.

57. Although the participation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the spring session was a practice that should be encouraged, the first priority was to identify methods of successfully implementing the Monterrey Consensus. In that regard, the wider involvement of regional commissions and regional development banks was extremely important, as was the participation of the private sector, which played a substantial role in development. The possibility of working with the Global Compact should also be explored to enhance participation by the private sector in various thematic issues. The Council faced significant challenges in the coming year and its substantive session should therefore be devoted to a theme broad enough to give added value. Clearly, it was important to consider the input of the system to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

58. **Ms. Izata** (Observer for Angola) said that the main goal of the Brussels Programme of Action would be attained only if the least developed countries could count on the support of developed partners. Export-led growth was an important prerequisite for poverty

reduction and sustainable development, since most of them depended on commodity export revenue. Preferential market initiatives offered by the United States and other countries had remained underutilized because of such supply-side constraints as the lack of trade-related capacity, non-tariff barriers, rules of origin and product standards.

59. Further progress would not be achieved without renewed policy commitment by developed partners. The declining trend of ODA had worsened productive capacity, investment and trade conditions in the least developed countries, pushing their debt to unsustainable levels. As soon as was practicable, all developed countries should achieve and maintain the goal of contributing 0.20 per cent of their gross national product to the least developed countries. Everything should also be done to ensure that the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States could effectively and efficiently carry out its mandate.

60. **Mr. Ikouebe** (Congo) said that many developing countries were calling for the international community to fulfil its commitments, as poverty increased and the gulf widened between the developed and developing nations, particularly those in Africa. The *World Economic Survey 2004* had indicated that the global recovery with growth averaging 3.5 per cent should trickle down to all regions. Paradoxically, the poverty level had remained high in the developing countries. Moreover, with lack of resources remaining a major handicap, the poorest countries in Africa, even if they were to achieve their expected growth targets, would not be able to attain the Millennium Development Goals. There was no better time to reaffirm the essential role of the Council in following up the recommendations of major international conferences. As indicated by the Secretary-General, the strengthening of coordination and substantive linkages among the Council, its subsidiary organs and the executive boards of the United Nations funds and programmes would be critical to the comprehensive monitoring of the implementation of every global consensus. The Council should use the current dialogue to define more precisely the role of each organ in the process and forge the synergy that would promote the integrated and coordinated review and refocusing of its work. The outcome of the spring meetings of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions should also be used to best advantage. The implementation of the Monterrey Consensus had become urgent at a time when most developing countries were suffering from the lack of investment capital, the decline of ODA inflows and the burden of debt.

61. For the Congo, investment and debt workout were the most pressing matters to be addressed in the quest to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Accordingly, national initiatives had been taken to combat graft and corruption, regulate public procurement, make the budgeting process transparent and build statistical and other capacities by involving the various partners and promoting sound resource allocation.

62. **Mr. Camara** (Guinea) said that the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action gave his country hope in its pursuit of national poverty-reduction strategies. He was grateful to all development partners for their commitment and appealed to all bilateral and multilateral donors to lighten the debt burden of the least developed countries. Donor support in building productive, human and institutional capacity would foster LDC ownership of the Programme of Action. Innovative review mechanisms should be instituted to appraise national and regional economic and social performance under the Programme and the contribution of the various development partners to poverty reduction. The United Nations system, particularly the Office of the High Representative, was to be commended for leading the effort to coordinate the implementation of the outcomes of global conferences devoted to economic and social development. His delegation endorsed the recommendations in the various reports and believed that the speedy implementation of the Programme of Action offered the best solution for the least developed, landlocked and small island developing countries to eradicate poverty and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

63. **Mr. Shimizu** (Japan) said that, in addressing the economic and social challenges facing mankind, the United Nations system needed to review its activities and maintain its relevance for the majority of its stakeholders or risk losing its sense of relevance and legitimacy. If the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summit meetings were to be realized, much would depend on the streamlining and rationalization of the activities of the Economic and Social Council. Better communication among Council

members, the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and the advisory groups on Africa would need to be sustained. Better use should be made of the regional commissions; they had demonstrated, within existing resources, the quality of input they could provide and the practice should be extended to other Council activities. Similarly, interaction should be ensured between the functional commissions and subsidiary bodies. Thematic coherence was important to addressing broad issues in a coordinated and integrated manner that ensured budgetary discipline while keeping the energies of the international community focused on priority issues of the moment.

64. **Mr. Kommasith** (Observer for the Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that, in addition to providing a broad account of the extent to which the LDCs and their development partners had implemented the Brussels Programme of Action, the Secretary-General's report should include analytical assessments of the impact on local communities. In the main, his delegation shared the view that the primary responsibility for implementing the Programme of Action lay with the LDCs but the policy commitment they had demonstrated warranted genuine political, financial and moral support from their development partners.

65. His country had set up high-level structures for monitoring, coordinating and reporting on national implementation of the Programme of Action. Attaching great importance to that and the Millennium Development Goals, the Government had mainstreamed most of the goals and targets into the National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy. To halve poverty by 2015 and to exit LDC status by 2020, his country needed to mobilize sufficient resources internally and externally to surmount the challenges it faced as a landlocked least developed country.

66. **Ms. Mammadova** (Azerbaijan) said that the Council had a crucial role to play in reviewing implementation and should promote wider and more effective interaction between its functional commissions and the governing bodies of United Nations funds and programmes with a view to ensuring that they drew on relevant policy guidance from the commissions. Increased interaction between the Council and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination would strengthen the policy guidance role of the Council and have positive effects on work in the field. Continuity and perseverance in the Council's work were essential for the follow-up process. Azerbaijan fully supported the Secretary-General's suggestions on the role of the Council and its subsidiary machinery in preparation for the 2005 high-level plenary.

67. **Mr. Penjo** (Bhutan) said that his country was encouraged by the efforts to follow up the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and to mainstream the Brussels Programme of Action within the programmes of various agencies. Much, however, remained to be done to fulfil the goals and commitments of the Brussels Programme. Capacity constraints posed a major challenge to the LDCs, as did impediments that could not be overcome without the financial and technical support of development partners. Of immediate consequence to the incidence of poverty in LDCs was their lack of resources for the delivery of essential social services. Bhutan continued to rely heavily on ODA for its development programmes. It also lacked a large domestic market and a strategic trading location to attract foreign direct investment and private external inflows. Among the main challenges were trade and transit constraints, limited private sector capacity and shortage of skilled manpower. While he agreed that the LDCs bore the primary responsibility for their own development, the role of bilateral and multilateral development partners in meeting resource gaps in a predictable and timely manner would be critical for the successful implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action.

68. **Mr. Gouveia** (Mozambique) reiterated his country's support for the Brussels Programme of Action, noting that a focal point for national implementation had already been appointed. He urged all development partners to match the strong commitment of LDCs to pursue the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action.

69. **Mr. Boehnke** (Managing Director, Common Fund for Commodities) said the Fund was an intergovernmental financial institution established under the auspices of UNCTAD. It cooperated with other multilateral organizations and civil society to support socio-economic development and to reduce poverty. The Fund focused on productivity and quality improvement, marketing, horizontal and vertical diversification, private sector support, price risk management, and assistance to the effective functioning of a liberalized global economy. Commodities remained the backbone of economies in a

large majority of developing countries, particularly LDCs, and more than 50 developing countries depended on three or fewer leading commodities for more than half of their export revenue. A decade-long decline in the terms of trade for commodities of export interest to developing countries, as well as sharp price fluctuations, had aggravated the situation. Long before the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the Fund had accorded priority to the situation of the least developed countries and continued to do so. Under its second Five-Year Plan 2003-2007 and as of June 2004, the Fund had approved a total of 190 projects, of which 127 were regular and 63 fast-track projects, at an overall cost of US$ 380.8 million.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.